

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04

NSAE-00 SIL-01 DODE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 L-02

NIC-01 SAJ-01 /046 W

----- 000265

R 211600Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9681

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, ELAB, IT

SUBJECT: LABOR - VANNI REPELS CHALLENGE IN UIL MEETING

1. SUMMARY: IN AN ADROIT EXHIBITION OF LEADERSHIP, UIL SECRETARY GENERAL VANNI REPELLED A CHALLENGE BY THE SOCIALISTS ON THE ISSUE OF LABOR UNIT. VANNI'S THESIS THAT NO FURTHER ADVANCES IN LABOR UNITY ARE CURRENTLY POSSIBLE WAS APPROVED BY A MAJORITY OF THE UIL CENTRAL COMMITTEE. THOUGH THE REQUISITE SIXTH VOTE WAS NOT ACHIEVED, THE VANNI LINE IN EFFECT PREVAILED. END SUMMARY.

2. IN THE THREE-DAY CONVOCAION OF THE UIL CENTRAL COMMITTEE JUST CONCLUDED, SECRETARY GENERAL RAFFAELE VANNI SURVIVED YET ANOTHER CHALLENGE TO HIS LEADERSHIP. VANNI REITERATED HIS POLICY WITH RESPECT TO LABOR UNIT, NAMELY, THAT FEDERATION CGIL-CISL-UIL (CCU) REPRESENTED THE MAXIMUM DEGREE OF UNITY CURRENTLY ADVISABLE, AND THAT GURANTEES ON COMPLETE AUTONOMY BETWEEN UNIONS AND PARTIES WERE BOTH VITAL AND LACKING.

3. VANNI'S THESIS WAS CHALLENGED STRONGLY BY THE SOCIALIST PLURALITY IN PARTICULAR NATIONAL SECRETARY LUCIANO RUFINO WHO HAS

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DESIGNS ON VANNI'S JOB. (THE UIL CENTRAL COMMITTEE, REFLECTING

THE POWER RELATIONSHIP AS OF THE 1973 CONGRESS, CONSISTS OF 49 SOCIALISTS, 30 REPUBLICANS AND 30 SOCIAL DEMOCRATS). THEY INSISTED THAT UIL SHOULD GO ON RECORD FAVORING A DEFINITE COMMITMENT TO ORGANIC MERGER OF THE THREE CONFEDERATIONS BY 1977. IN RESPONSE, VANNI DECLARED THAT, IF THE REQUIRED SIXTH PERCENT VOTE COULD NOT BE SECURED FOR HIS POLICY PLATFORM, HE WOULD CALL AN EXTRAORDINARY CONGRESS OF UIL.

4. THIS THREAT IMMEDIATELY BEGAN TO COOL SOCIALIST ARDOR FOR A CONFRONTATION. NATIONAL SECRETARY RUGGERO RAVENNA (ALSO A SOCIALIST)

DECLARED THERE WAS INDEED A PROBLEM WITH RESPECT TO AUTONOMY. "THE TRUE CAUSE WHICH PARALYZES THE UNITARY FEDERATION, "SAID RAVENNA, "IS ITS INABILITY TO MAKE ITSELF AUTONOMOUS FROM THE COMMUNIST PARTY." THE PCI, IN FACT, RESERVES TO ITSELF "THE INITIATIVES FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF LABOR CRISIS BECAUSE IT WANTS TO ACHIEVE THE HISTORIC COMPROMISE WITH THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS," RAVENNA COMPLAINED. HE LATER STATED THAT AN EXTRAORDINARY CONGRESS "WOULD BE THE GREATEST GIFT WE COULD GIVE TO THE ANTIUNITY FORCES" SINCE THE EFFECT WOULD BE TO SUSPEND THE CURRENT MOVES TOWARD UNITY.

5. FOLLOWING SOME FACE-SAVING COMPROMISES ON THE WORDING OF CERTAIN PORTIONS OF VANNI'S DOCUMENT, UNANIMOUS APPROVAL WAS VOTED FOR THOSE PORTIONS DEALING WITH POLICIES ON UPCOMING NEGOTIATIONS, THE NEED TO ACHIEVE FULL AUTONOMY PRIOR TO ORGANIC LABOR UNITY, AND THE DISSOLUTION OF INTERNAL UNION FACTIONS. ON THE QUESTION OF THE ROLE OF THE CCU (I.E., VANNI'S POSITION THAT THE CCU CURRENTLY REPRESENTS THE MAXIMUM POSSIBLE LABOR UNITY), THE VOTE WAS 57 TO 40 IN FAVOR, I.E., LESS THAN THE REQUIRED SIXTY PERCENT OF THE 109 MEMBERS.

6. COMMENT: VANNI'S STRATEGY WAS BASED ON HIS ASSERTION THAT HIS PLATFORM DERIVES FROM THE POLICIES LAID DOWN AT THE MARCH 1973

CONGRESS. THE VOTE ON THE CCU MEANS THIS QUESTION OFFICIALLY REMAINS OPEN. VANNI WARNED, HOWEVER, THAT ANY ATTEMPT TO IMPLEMENT THE MINORITY SOCIALIST POSITION IN THE COMING CCU DISCUSSIONS WOULD LEAD TO THE CONVOCAION OF AN EXTRAORDINARY CONGRESS.

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7. VANNI'S CONFIDENTIAL AIDE, FERIOLI, TELLS US THAT DURING THE YEAR-END UNION MEMBERSHIP DRIVE, WHEN WORKERS RENEW THEIR UNION AFFILIATIONS, THE REPUBLICANS HAVE GAINED AT THE EXPENSE OF THE SOCIALISTS. THIS GOES A LONG WAY TOWARD EXPLAINING SOCIALIST RELUCTANCE TO PUSH THEIR OPPOSITION TOO FAR, SINCE AT A NEW CONGRESS THE NEW POWER RELATIONSHIPS WOULD PREVAIL.

8. THE NEXT STAGE IN THE UNITARY PROCESS WILL BE THE JOINT CONVO-
CATION IN APRIL OF THE GENERAL COUNCILS (CENTRAL COMMITTEE, IN THE
CASE OF UIL) OF THE THREE CONFEDERATIONS TO DECIDE ON A
A TIMETABLE FOR ORGANIC MERGER. CLEARLY, IF VANNI PERSEVERES
IN HIS PRESNET POLICY, NO AGREEMENT WILL EMERGE SINCE ANY AC-
CELERATION OF THE UNITARY PROCESS WILL CAUSE HIM TO CALL A UIL
CONGRESS WHICH WILL AT THE VERY LEAST PUT MATTERS ON ICE FOR
SEVERAL MONTHS. END COMMENT.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LABOR RELATIONS, LABOR UNION OFFICIALS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 FEB 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MorefiRH
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975ROME02605
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750063-0025
From: ROME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750223/aaaaauls.tel
Line Count: 125
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MorefiRH
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <22 APR 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <19 MAY 2003 by MorefiRH>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LABOR - VANNI REPELS CHALLENGE IN UIL MEETING
TAGS: PINT, ELAB, IT, (VANNI, RAFFAELE)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006